

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the specification as follows:

On page 1, after the title, please add the following paragraph:

This application is a national stage filing under 35 U.S.C. § 371 of International Application No. PCT/CH2004/000208, filed on April 2, 2004, which claims the benefit of priority to EP Application No. 03405231.6, filed on April 4, 2003.

On page 1, before the paragraph beginning on line 4, please add the following heading:

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

On page 2, before the paragraph beginning at line 34, please add the following heading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

On page 4, before the paragraph beginning at line 24, please add the following heading:

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

On page 4, before the paragraph beginning at line 31, please add the following heading:

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

On page 5, insert the following to the paragraph beginning at line 19:

Figure 2 clearly shows the effect of this oxygenation on 20 a sheet of Ag-Mg (0.9 at% Mg) alloy. The outer layers 12 of small, less than 20 μm , grain size may be distinguished. Moreover, the Vickers hardness measurement gives a value of 57 for the outer layers and 51 for the central layer 14. This clearly proves that the magnesium does not oxidize during this step, since if the alloy now contained MgO , the Vickers hardness would be much higher, around 130 to 150, as illustrated in Figure 1. Next, in a second phase, the part is placed in a stream of air or oxygen, at a temperature of between 400 and 850°C, preferably about 600°C. The magnesium is then oxidized to MgO . The duration of this phase depends on the temperature, the oxygen partial pressure and the thickness of the oxide layer desired.

On page 10, change the heading to read:

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS: